



**Union of Canadian Transportation Employees
Union canadienne des employés des transports**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Airline Inspection: the Public knows the Rules; does the Government?

(OTTAWA) The Union of Canadian Transportation Employees (UCTE/PSAC) is the national union for Canada's transportation inspectors. Civil aviation inspectors comprise a large and important segment of our membership.

With the recent report showing that the four major Canadian airlines had been requesting that Transport Canada transportation safety inspectors sign a confidentiality agreement before proceeding with any inspection work, UCTE is now releasing the results of a poll it commissioned on the work of safety inspectors in the field of aviation.

This poll found that a majority of the Canadian public assumed or did not know that Transport Canada aviation inspectors are directly involved in inspecting Canada's airlines. Additionally, over 80% of Canadians clearly oppose the airlines as the only direct inspector of aircraft.

Transport Canada has been quietly implementing safety management systems (SMS) for Canada's airlines. These systems place responsibility for aviation safety directly onto the airline companies.

Part of the problem with this type of system lies with the confusion it creates with responsibility and accountability. Aviation inspectors are increasingly confused and concerned about SMS and the role that inspectors play in ensuring the safety of our airlines. Do they simply have to check off items on a list, making sure that the airlines are complying with the bare minimum of requirements, or is there more to their role?

The commissioned poll shows that the public believes that the Minister of Transport is responsible for aviation safety in Canada and that the inspectorate is directly inspecting the airlines under the delegative authorities given to them by the Minister. Unfortunately, this is not always the case with SMS. Inspectors may not directly inspect an airline with an SMS license. UCTE believes this is wrong and that TC inspectors should always directly inspect Canada's airlines. It is apparent that the Canadian public agrees with us.

UCTE urges the Minister of Transport to clarify that SMS is indeed an additional layer of safety and not one simply integrated into general reviews of airline practices. The Minister should also make clear that aviation inspectors will always be directly inspecting airplanes and directly auditing Canada's airlines.

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